

MARTIN (H. A.)

The American Medical Association

VS.



HENRY A. MARTIN, M.D.,

MEMBER OF SAID ASSOCIATION,

AND

LATE CHAIRMAN OF ITS COMMITTEE ON VACCINATION.



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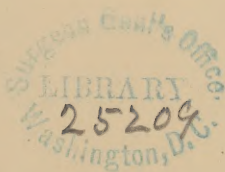


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PREFACE.

"DR. HENRY A. MARTIN of Boston, Chairman of the Committee on Vaccination, was removed for using insulting language toward the association in an article on vaccination which he had published in "The Homœopathic Journal."

The above paragraph appeared, on the 5th of May past, in the telegraphic column of every daily paper from Popham's Colony to Patagonia. Knowing what strange freaks are sometimes played by telegraphic-operators, I supposed that there was some mistake, not in the announcement of my removal, but of its cause ; for nothing could be farther from my thought than offering insult to the American Medical Association or any of its members. When, however, a full report was received, I found that the *telegram* was very nearly accurate. I was removed from the Chairmanship of the Committee on Vaccination ; my expulsion was moved ; a motion was also made that charges should be preferred against me ; and, after a great deal more of froth and fury, the whole matter was turned over to the Committee on Ethics, who, in turn, have referred it to the Massachusetts Medical Society.

As it is, *perhaps*, important that the members of that Society should have a knowledge of the enormity on which they are required to sit in judgment, more precise and full than they would be likely to glean from newspaper scraps and button-hole whispers, I have prepared this pamphlet, containing, 1st, So much of the report of the late meeting of the American Medical Association as relates to me ; and, 2d, The "*Teterrima causa belli*," the obnoxious article. I hope, before giving any verdict

either in their corporate or individual capacity, *gentlemen* of the Massachusetts Medical Society will give both a careful and *fair* consideration.

I have for nearly thirty years devoted a great deal of attention to vaccination, and, for about fifteen years, to what, in the total absence of all State or National provision, has proved the extremely important specialty of procuring, propagating, and supplying to the profession, the best attainable vaccine virus. The practice of this laborious specialty has brought me into direct and most agreeable communication with many thousands of physicians in every part of America, and of every grade and shade of medical education and opinion. I have never asked an applicant for vaccine lymph, or information in regard to vaccination, whether he believed in this or that doctrine or dogma: I only knew, that, in supplying such means and counsel, I accomplished just so much towards the understanding and advancement of a most beneficent practice, which, notwithstanding the arduous labors of the American Medical Association, is wofully neglected, and far from perfectly understood and appreciated. When, therefore, an opportunity was literally offered me to communicate *directly* with a body of from five to six thousand physicians, having absolute medical control of millions of human beings, and having myself, besides, information to communicate, which in my opinion, as it soon will be in that of every intelligent physician, is second only in importance to that afforded by Jenner in the original announcement of his discovery, I did not hesitate. I was invited to write a note on ANIMAL VACCINATION, to be published in a perfectly respectable homœopathic journal *edited by a distinguished Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society*. I wrote the note at once, and shall offer no apology whatever, either for it or the place where I saw fit to publish it, only regretting, now that it has gained such wide and widening publicity, that it was so hastily done, so little worthy of the kind and unkind notice that it has received.

I do not believe in Homœopathy. I have, over and over again, written and spoken my disbelief; but I have done so boldly, openly, and, I hope, fairly and honorably, and have no sympathy with the wretched intolerance, which, as it once infested Theology, still largely infests Medicine, and excites the contempt and derision of all fair and candid minds.

The time will yet come when societies of medical men will not be thought to cover themselves with honor, by not even permitting a Homœopathist to utter a single word unstified by hisses and groans, or by howling anathemas, and flinging lying *telegrams* broadcast over the land, to the attempted detriment of a brother, whose only crime has been to strive, by all honorable means, for the wider and fuller diffusion of what every sane physician, of whatever school, considers a matchless blessing and benefit to humanity.

HENRY A. MARTIN.

27 Dudley Street, Boston Highlands.

JUNE 2, 1871.

EXTRACTS

From Report of Transactions of American Medical Association, at its Twenty-second Annual Convention at San Francisco on the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th of May, 1871; being so much thereof as has relation to the matter of Henry A. Martin, M.D., late Chairman of Committee on Vaccination.

FIRST DAY.

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Committee on Vaccination, Dr. Henry A. Martin, Massachusetts, Chairman, continued for one year.
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SECOND DAY.

Dr. Gibbons read an article on vaccination, published in a homœopathic journal,* by Dr. Henry A. Martin, with his official title, as Chairman of Committee on Vaccination of the American Medical Association, affixed. The opinions enunciated by the writer seemed to grate harshly on the ears of members of the profession. When he had finished reading the article, Dr. Gibbons moved for a reconsideration of the vote whereby Dr. Martin was continued Chairman of the Committee on Vaccination for another year. The gentleman had insulted each and every member of the association by the publication; and, in justice to themselves, immediate action should be taken in the matter.

* The New-England Medical Gazette, January, 1871.

Dr. Storer was unacquainted with the circumstances of the case, and felt that the association should suspend judgment until Dr. Martin could be heard.

Members called for a second reading of the article.

Dr. Gibbons read the first few lines.

Members. — “That’s enough.”

Dr. Dawson said that the article was an insult to every member of the association, and moved that Dr. Martin be expelled as a member of the association.

Dr. Bibb offered an amendment, — that a committee of three be appointed to prefer charges against the gentleman.

Dr. Davis suggested the reference of the matter to the Massachusetts State Medical Society, to which Dr. Martin belonged.

Dr. Johnson gave Massachusetts a shot for her delinquencies: many of the members consorted with homœopathists in that State; hence nothing would be accomplished by referring the matter to the local society there.

Dr. Stout offered an amendment to Dr. Bibb’s motion, — that the matter be referred to the Committee on Ethics.

Dr. Gibbons’s motion to remove prevailed: Dr. Stout’s amendment to refer the matter to the Committee on Ethics was also passed.

The Committee on Ethics was appointed by the chair, and consists of Dr. Henry Gibbons, Dr. Davis of Chicago, Dr. F. S. Smith, Dr. Parsons, and Dr. Toner.

FOURTH DAY.

The Committee on Ethics reported to refer the case of Dr. Martin of Massachusetts, mentioned in the record of

the first day's meeting, to the local society. Dr. T. M. Wise of Kentucky was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Vaccination, in place of Dr. Martin, removed.

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THE OBNOXIOUS ARTICLE.

Reprinted from "The New-England Medical Gazette," edited by Dr. I. T. Talbot (FELLOW OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY), Vol. VI., No. I., January, 1871.

ANIMAL VACCINATION.

MR. EDITOR, — I am not one of your household of medical faith, in fact, quite the reverse ; but, whatever I may have done in the past, I shall not now write a line that can ruffle the temper of the most sensitive believer in Hahnemann and his famous dogma. In these days of professional difference, it is pleasant and profitable to know that there are some few matters in which we all agree. Vaccination is one of these. Throwing out of all consideration, as, indeed, it should always be thrown out, a class of men, who through imperfect knowledge or immense self-conceit, or more frequently from an almost necessary union of the two qualities, are inevitable sceptics, no physician, of whatever school, denies the immense benefits of the discovery of Jenner. From a very early period of my student-life, now nearly thirty years ago, I was fully convinced of its infinite value, and filled with wonder, also, that so clear and great a good should be so imperfectly appreciated by the people, and even by the profession. Stranger still is it, that, in a country so widely and justly noted for general intelligence as this, no provision whatever should be made by the State

for the vaccination of the people, or even for the proper and methodical protection of the army and navy. Thinking of all these things, I have always devoted great and constant attention to the subject, and, for the past twelve years, have endeavored, with a success which has given me great comfort and encouragement, to perform an office, which, in all other civilized countries, is assumed by the government, — that of supplying the profession with the best attainable *materiel* for vaccination.

In the performance of this duty, I spared no pains to obtain the very best stocks of vaccine virus. I entered into correspondence with many of the European governments, and with some of the most distinguished writers upon and practitioners of vaccination. I obtained from Germany, France, and England supplies of lymph from many and different sources. After fully and fairly testing these, I at last came to the conclusion that the very best of all known "stocks" of humanized virus was that so religiously preserved by the National Vaccine Institution, derived by successive human vaccinations, for seventy years, from lymph collected by the hand of Jenner himself. The virus which I have issued for eight years has been from this Jennerian "stock." The vaccinations made from this lymph seemed to me to leave nothing to be desired; and when, failing leisure to visit Paris myself, I sent a special and most intelligent agent there last spring, to fully investigate the whole subject of animal vaccination, and to procure ample supplies of lymph in such forms as should enable me to inaugurate the method in America, it was more from a feeling that it was incumbent upon me to investigate fully every thing relating to my favorite specialty, rather than

from any hope or expectation that the new source and method of supply would prove superior, or even equal, to that which I had so long enthusiastically and honestly commended. I was resolved, however, to thoroughly investigate the subject, and to give the result of my experiments and observations to the profession. My impression was that the verdict would be adverse. It has proved entirely otherwise. After four months' daily study of animal vaccination, and the phenomena in the human and bovine species, following the use of the two original "stocks" of which I shall speak, I have no hesitation whatever in asserting, that, in every respect, this lymph gives evidence of its superiority to any of which I have had any previous personal knowledge. This superiority is shown in every stage of the disease induced by its inoculation,—in the greater size and perfection of form and color of the vesicle and areola; in the decidedly greater, though by no means violent or alarming, febrile phenomena on the ninth and tenth days; in the uniform perfection of form and umbilicated centre, &c., and much greater size, of the crusts; and last, though by no means least, the adherence of the crust to the full twenty-one days mentioned by the older writers, and from that to even thirty days. All the points in which the new lymph differs from the old are in favor of the new, without exception. In all respects, vaccinations made with it correspond exactly with those described by Jenner, Willan, Brice, and the numerous writers of the first decade of the century. No other vaccinations I have ever made, however perfect I may have considered them, have thus exactly corresponded.

For instance, the two most satisfactory "stocks" of which I had any previous practical knowledge were that of Ceely

(which I received from himself, and which was derived from the variolation of the cow), and of the National Vaccine Institution of England. In both of these, the course of the disease was very regular, the succession of phenomena perfectly uniform; but in both it was shorter than in Jenner's classic description. With Ceely's "stock," the areola commenced on the seventh day, and was fully formed at the end of the eighth: the vesicles and resulting crusts were smaller, the crust easily removable on the twelfth or thirteenth, and falling spontaneously on the fourteenth or fifteenth day. The areola of the institution "stock" began at the end of the seventh day, and was fully formed before the ninth; the vesicles and crusts a good deal larger and more perfect in form than those of Ceely; but the latter easily detached on the fourteenth day, and often falling on the fifteenth or sixteenth, — always long before the twenty-first. I have written hastily this — not article, but mere announcement — to your readers, of the results to which I have come in using lymph taken from heifers inoculated from other heifers, in long succession, from an original case of cow-pox, discovered in 1866 at Beaugency in France, and from others inoculated in the same manner from one to another; from a heifer inoculated from a spontaneous case of "horse-pox," the fully-proved origin of the disease as occurring in the cow.*

* The doctrine that the vaccine disease in the cow was derived from the horse was strongly insisted upon by Jenner: he maintained, however, that this disease of the horse was that known to farriers as the "grease." In this he was at once right and wrong. In those early days, large groups of differing diseases, even in man, were included under one term. Much more was this the case in veterinary medicine and the wretched empiricism of farriers and jockeys, which passed for such. Under the term "grease" were in-

At some future and not distant time, I shall endeavor to write more fully on this subject : at present, my very scanty leisure only permits such hasty and desultory efforts as the present. I have fitted up a stable and office in the rear of my residence, 27 Dudley Street, Boston Highlands, — the first for heifers ; and the latter fitted with all necessary apparatus for securing them while being vaccinated, and while lymph is being collected. I intend to continue the propagation of the two “stocks” mentioned above, from one heifer to another, and shall therefore, at all times, have them in different stages of the disease ; and on any day, from three to four, P.M., shall be most happy to afford to any physician, of any school, opportunity for actual observation, and any information on the subject which a long experience may be supposed to qualify me to give. I have, notwithstanding my not being a homœopathist, borne repeated testimony to

cluded, at least, two totally differing affections : one a local affection of the heels merely ; the other a constitutional disease, with a general eruption, like that of the exanthemata, in the mouth and over the general surface, and observed on the heels on account of the absence of hair. The first was much the more common affection : very frequently repeated experiments made with the fluid obtained from it were utterly futile ; and so Jenner’s doctrine fell into neglect, and even ridicule. The other and unknown disease, infinitely less frequent, occurring only rarely and at long intervals, as an epidemic in the horse tribe, and ignorantly included under the general term “grease,” is the original of cow-pox, as has been, in late years, fully established by the observations and experiments, at Alfort and elsewhere, by Bouley, and many other most competent observers. Jenner was a most careful observer and reasoner, a worthy disciple of his great master and loving friend, John Hunter ; and in this, his assertion of the origin of cow-pox, so long considered absurd, he is, after many years, proved not to have spoken idly. The mistake that he was supposed to have made had its origin, not in any fallacy of his, but in the ignorance of veterinary practitioners, who classed at least two entirely diverse diseases under one name.

the great and peculiar care taken by homœopathists to obtain the best possible vaccine lymph. I have had abundant evidence of this in the great number of that school, in all parts of the country, who have corresponded with me during the past twelve years. Knowing this, I have felt confident that your readers would feel an interest in an enterprise by which, for the first time, authentic original non-humanized cow-pox lymph has been propagated on this side of the Atlantic, and offered to the medical profession of America.*

I offer, therefore, no apologies for my topic, but must again ask your indulgence and that of your readers for the hasty, desultory manner in which it has been presented.

HENRY A. MARTIN.

*Chairman of Committee on Vaccination,
of American Medical Association.*

NOTE BY THE EDITOR. — We fully agree with Dr. Martin as to the special care taken by homœopathic physicians in obtaining pure vaccine virus ; and we are sure our readers will be glad to know that a physician so painstaking and careful as Dr. Martin has secured virus from Jenner's original source. For several years, we have relied upon his vaccine virus with confidence and entire satisfaction ; but repeated trials of the " new stock " have shown us its much

* What has been advertised and extensively sold as "vaccine virus from kine," and as "cow-pox crusts," is not cow-pox virus at all, but the result of "*retro-vaccination*," or the vaccination of heifers, &c., with the old humanized lymph. I believe, however, that I need say little more about this "virus from kine:" it has been extensively tested by the profession, and judging from a great many letters that I have received, and remarks that I have heard, the verdict is unanimous, and by no means favorable.

greater activity and perfection, and we especially recommend it to all physicians of our school.

It would be easy to extend this pamphlet to something approaching the dignity of a "tall" octavo, by adding editorial comments both of the secular and medical press, criticising and ridiculing the narrow bigotry, the brainless violence and malice which characterize this attack on me. I do not intend any such publication at present. I know how much noise a very few fools can make in large assemblies, and how very unfair it would be to judge a great and noble, if not always VERY liberal profession, by half a dozen blatant members of it. I therefore add only one of many comments on the action of the American Medical Association in regard to the ex-chairman of its committee on vaccination. It is from the ablest medical editorial pen in this country, — that of the fearless editor of "The New-York Medical Gazette," the most influential and widely-circulated professional journal in America.

"The next noticeable piece of business was a motion to expel the chairman of one of the committees for the offence of having written a communication to a homœopathic medical periodical; an action which was characterized as 'an insult to every member of the association.' The article in question we read at the time of its publication; but, although we wondered at the editor's extreme liberality in giving gratuitous insertion to so palpable an advertisement of the commodities which the writer had for sale, we were not sensitive enough to appreciate the personal insult conveyed to ourselves; nor do we now call to mind any clause of the code of ethics which forbids a medical writer to

publish his dissent from homœopathy in a homœopathic periodical. Altogether undue importance has been given by noisy declamation in our own ranks to the Hahnemannian fallacy, which would probably have died of inanition long ago had not injudicious denunciation aroused popular interest in its behalf." — NEW-YORK MEDICAL GAZETTE, *May* 20, 1871.

